DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 466 976 FL 027 371

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TITLE	Collecting Texts in Craho and Portuguese for Teaching.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	6p.; In: Indigenous Languages across the Community. Proceedings of the Annual Conference on Stabilizing Indigenous Languages (7th, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, May 11-14, 2000); see ED 462 231. Supported by the University of Tocantins (UNITINS).
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/ILAC.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Cultural Differences; *Culturally Relevant Education; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Indigenous Populations; *Language of Instruction; *Portuguese
IDENTIFIERS	Brazil

ABSTRACT

The Crao are an indigenous group of Tocantins in Brazil who speak a Je language of the Timbira group. In the Aldeias, Crao students often use the same materials as other Brazilian students. The Indians often do not consider these educational materials good because textbook content does not pertain to their culture and they cannot make sense out of it. Researchers developed a collection of texts in Crao and Portuguese for educational purposes. The text presented in this paper describes an important Crao festival that involves a sacred axe. The educational materials reflect the everyday practices of the different Indian people of Tocantins, starting with the Crao. The paper offers a passage, which is the first lesson in the textbook, that describes the festival (which celebrates good harvesting). In order to prepare an educational program using this text, teachers can have students make word lists or can record and listen to different texts in specific or related languages. The teacher must be bilingual and well-prepared with a methodological sequence of subjects relating to Indian life. (SM)

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ED 466 976

Collecting Texts in Crahô and Portuguese for Teaching

Sueli Maria de Souza[1]

The Craô[2] are an indigenous group of Tocantins in Brazil. They speak a Jê language of the Timbira group. When I carried out research for my master's degree and my doctoral dissertation among the Craô people (in 1987-1988, 1994 and 1996), I worked with the educational programs that had been set up for the Indians of the area—programs that do not work very well yet, due in part to a lack of adequate linguistic research.

In order to make a collection of texts in Craô and Portuguese for educational purposes, I had to come to terms with the complex reality of the indigenous people of Tocantins, specifically the Craô. First, I had to live among them and become aware of their social and educational situation as well as their traditional culture. I recorded a number of texts that dealt with traditional lifeways, modes of thinking, and survival strategies—how they build their houses, how they take care of children, and so on. After transcribing these data, I was able to organize a collection of texts useful for educational purposes. These texts are helpful not only to the Craô, but also to other fieldworkers.

The text I am going to present as an example describes one of the most important festivals to the Craô. After many years, the Indians got back their "sacred axe"; it had been kept in an exhibition at the Anthropological Museum of the University of São Paulo. Because of the return of the sacred axe to the "pátio of the aldeia," *câ pe crin câm*, they renewed an old ritual in which they celebrate good planting, good harvesting, and so forth. They name this festival *cajre ijon amji quin*,[3] which literally it means, "this little sacred axe is our own and true happiness."

Spelling Key

a	/a/,/â/	a mam; cã	to you; "pátio"
c	/k/	cã; co:cu	you; river; (he-) or (she-); we
qu	/kh/	quin; que	nice; he or she
e	/e/, /é/	que , cajre	he; little axe
g	/_/, /g/	garcua; aogati	your mouth, day
h	/h/	harkua	his mouth
i	/i/, /j/, /ĩ/,/in/	i to, amji, to jin	my eye, self, sit down
m	/m/	i mã	to me
n	/n/	nare	negation
o	/o/, /ó/	co; to	river; to do, to cause
p	/p/	pej	good, pretty good
r	/r/	crou; rop	trunk (tora); dog
t	/t/	tep	fish
u	/u/	cunare, ua	every; I
v	/v/	veve	butterfly
tch	/t_/	intchun	my father
ji	/ñ/	amji	self

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Cultural and Educational Notes

In the "Aldeias," Craô students use the same materials as other Brazilian school children, or they use materials such as those shown below, due in part to a lack of good research data. The Indians do not consider these materials good because the contents of the books often do not pertain to their traditional lifeways; they can't make sense of such things out of context. They would like to have books on normal conversation and which would prepare them to live in any circumstances. They look to a chance to survive anywhere and having good educational programs; they want to be considered independent. Here is an example of this kind of material from a book prepared for the children of the Aldeias entitled *Canela-Krahô*:[4]

Capi te cati.	Capi's front leg is big.
Capi pa pec.	Capi's arm is weak.
Ita tep.	This is a fish.
Tep ita cati.	This fish is big.
Capi api.	Capi goes up.
Capi ita capa.	Capi get out this.
Capi ipa.	Capi is walking.

More recently, we got a sample of a textbook prepared by a Craô Indian. This textbook, however, is not geared to any specific level of student and also lacks helpful learning tools such as a key to pronunciation, sentence structure analyses, and so forth. The researcher or student is forced to guess at what the text means because the meaning of each word is not given. In sum, the researcher and the learner can not control the meanings of the words, or they can not understand for what or to whom the text is intended. The following is an excerpt from that textbook called *Maco*:[5]

> Maco ita mã mehumre mã apu cuhy, ne ame hampà. Me maco ita hyr caxuw me crow hô jitawyp caxô, me amcro mã me cuxu. Mã hapya mã cô kam me cunõ mã ihcahpôt, mã me to api, ne caxuw me crow hôa to me cajpy, ne tahnã me haxô, ne me cuhy.
>
> Translation into Portuguese: Este maco é um tipo de cesta que os homens tecem e levam dependurado no braço. Para tecer o maco eles tiram o olho do buriti, desfiam as folhas e põem os fios espalhados para secar. Depois de secos eles põem os fios na água para inchar.
>
> Translation into English: This bag is made and used by men in their arms. In order to make this maco, they get a kind of palm tree called *buriti*, strip the leaves, and then put them out to dry. After this is done, the men put the leaves into water in order to get them strong and big.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to prepare educational materials that reflect the everyday practices of the different Indian people of Tocantins, starting with the Craô, with whom I have carried out research. The passage reproduced below, which is also the first lesson in the textbook that I put together, describes a festival that celebrates good harvesting. During this festival, the Craô sing in the "pátio," *câ pe*, for three days. They also run around and see friends and relatives from far away. In order to prepare an educational program using the text, one can have students make words lists, or one can record and listen to different texts in specific or related languages.[6] Students should explore all possibilities in order to understand and talk about the text in Craô and Portuguese. The teacher must be bilingual and well prepared with a methodological sequence of subjects relating to Indian life. The following are samples of our collection of texts:

Practicing in Craô and Portuguese.

Lesson 1. Listen to the text.[7]

Title: ***Cajre ijon amji quin***

Pe aman pe ***cajre*** *ijon* ***amji quin*** *itam pej. Pe itar hon crinare:* ***arajhi****,* ***me pricac****, me ita nan ijin crinare.Pe ajco me a pan, ne me itic, ne* ***mea cucre crou to****. Pe aman, pe ita nan aogati incre.Aogati incre acan, pe cu te ame to amrem. Itar ha ma ame cutor. Cri cunare pin ame* ***cupron****, ne me* ***hoquet****: Cachoeira pin, Pedra Branca itar; Pedra Furada, Manoel Alves, me Galheiro, men Santa Cruz me ame cua ma cupron. Ne me hoquet ne me* ***honpun*** *pram. Ne ajco me cucren, to me cucre, honquet nan, pat cam, ne ajco taj mea pan, ne pan me tchua amji quin crinare. Pe a, ua nen apu i crin nare, ne apu itaj ame cot pra aoca pat cam ajco me amji man cre. Man pe hanen, hanen tchuam ten Canela pin hanen, me cua ma cator Maranhão pin. Pe hanen, hanem me, me honpun pram. Me cu te curum, pe me amji quin tam, ajco taj ne ame i cot me pra, ne mea cucre.*

Translation into Portuguese: A festa da Machadinha

Fizeram uma festa de Machadinha, aí avisou os pessoal das outras aldeias, ajuntou do Cachoeiro, do Santa Cruz, Manoel Alves, Pedra Furada, ajuntou muita gente, até lá do Maranhão, Canela veio também. Aí era muita gente, correr com tora, de manhã, de tarde, mita carne de gado, arroz, farinha. Aí nós comia bastante, ia banhar na fonte. Era muito importante. Cantava de noite. Aí nós brincava. Aí num parava dia nenhum na minha casa, sempre andando, toda vida mais pessoal. Ajuntando muita gente você não aquieta na sua casa. Tem que andar também, na rua, correr. (Só isso que aconteceu aqui.)

Translation into English: The little sacred axe party

The little axe party here was good. There was plenty of food, such as rice and beef; there was plenty of meat. We ate, and after eating, we ran around. For three days, we stayed together, always together. Together we went around. All the "aldeias" came together: Cachoeira, Pedra Branca here; Pedra Furada, Manoel Alves, and Galheiro, Santa Cruz and all our relatives came to stay together with

us. We had a very good visit with everybody. We could not stay in one place for a long time; we could go around all the time for some food, to run around and take a bath (in the river). In the morning, in the afternoon and at night we had something to do. Also the Canela, from Maranhão came to see us. They also stayed with us, and we had a good time and we went walking and running everywhere.

Practicing in the Craô Language.

A. Practice saying these words: (using a tape recorder)

cajre
ijon amji quin
arajhi
pricac me hoquet
cuam cupron
me honpun pram

B. Practice saying these sentences:

1. *cajre ita man ijon amji quin ita man pej*
2. *mea cucre crou to*
3. *increr*
4. *aogati increr a can me cute to hamren*
5. *ame cutor*
6. *crin cunare pin ame cupron*

C. Practice writing these words and sentences:

ita	"this"
itar	"here (near me)"
pej	"good; pretty; handsome; pretty good"
man	"postposition"
quin	"nice"
ijon	"my own"
*amj*i	"self"

1) Here is nice. (ita man pej)
2) My party was nice. (*ijon amji quin man pej*)
3) This party was nice. (*amji quin ita man pej*)

Endnotes

[1]Thanks to the University of Tocantins (UNITINS) for all their support, and thanks to Victor Golla for helping me with the abstract for the Toronto meeting.
[2]I am using Portuguese symbols in order to write in Craô. I find it very important and necessary for my purpose.
[3]This text was recorded November 10,1987, in the 'Aldeia Pedra Branca' from the informant Ricardo Coniri Craô.
[4]The example is in 'Cartilha Canela-Krahô', SIL, p.7, Brasília, 1988.

[5]This example is in "Objetos do dia-a-dia Krahô", p.8 e 29, MEC.
[6]I appreciated and used suggestions given in Emmon Bach, Dora Robinson, and Rose Robinson in the winter term of 1994-95, at the UNBC class FNST 101-3, (Haisla).
[7]Thanks to ULBRA and Elmer Graff to this new recording of the text.

FL027371

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Corporate Source: Northern Arizona University

Publication Date: March 2002

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